



National Council of
Maubere Resistance

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MEDIA RELEASE

**Indonesia's desperate attempt to revise
East Timor history**

In 1959, 14 Indonesian survivors of the failed separatist PERMESTA rebellion in Sulawesi fled to Portuguese Timor where they were granted asylum. Feeling ill at ease with the Portuguese system, they attempted to exploit local dissent among some Timorese ethnic groups, instigating an amateurish rebellion against the colonial administration in the Viqueque area. The Indonesian Consul in Dili supported these efforts, in opposition to the official position of Jakarta. The badly planned rebellion failed, causing the expulsion of the Indonesians, some 150 casualties and 60 Timorese deported to Angola and Mozambique by the Portuguese colonial authorities.

It is reported from Dili that Indonesia is now trying to rewrite history, attempting to force the surviving 1959 deported to state that their rebellion had been aimed at integration with Indonesia, so as to be able to claim that pro-Indonesian integration feelings have been present for a long time among many East Timorese, reaching an overwhelming majority in 1975.

A letter (005/866/depsos/VI/1995) was sent on 5 June by the Government Secretary to the 1959 deported, calling for their attendance at a meeting of the Indonesian 50th Independence Anniversary Committee on 8 June at 09.00, at the Governors office in Dili. The agenda of the meeting was "to collect data on the struggle of the East Timorese people, especially the Viqueque movement of 1959".

A participant in the meeting sent the following signed report

On the 8 of June the Secretary of the Governor Abilio Soares told us, those of 1959, in a very bold and menacing tone, that we must get together and write a national history stating that the East Timor people already wished integration with Indonesia as far back as 1959. This history would be sent as soon as possible to the Central Government in Jakarta, to be published by [President] Suharto and forwarded to the United Nations, as evidence of the desire since 1959 of the whole East Timorese people to integrate with Indonesia.

The meeting was chaired by the Governor's secretary Mr Chiquito Osorio and other Indonesian officials. He insisted that we surrender any official documentation of the time in our possession which may be useful to support this argument. Mr Jose Duarte, uncle of the Governor and of the meeting's Chairman said he had such documents, which he would make available to the Indonesian authorities.

Luisa TEUTONIO PEREIRA 0015-351-1-353 4009

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Indonesia is at present planning to build a monument in Viqueque as a memorial of the killing of many Timorese in 1959 by the Portuguese at the 'Watu Lari' river. It is planned to invite the Minister Secretary of State Murdiono to the laying of the first stone on 1 September 95. The monument should be inaugurated by 10 November 95.

The Governor's Secretary and Chiquito Osorio said they would visit the 13 regencies to find out the names of all the casualties of 1959 and locate their descendants, so that they can jointly write the history and join in building the monument. These promises by the Indonesian officials were meant to make the people satisfied.

Alexandre Jesus, from Ermera, told the meeting that many innocent people were detained by the Portuguese authorities at the time. Upon arrival in Angola, the Portuguese political police separate the deported into two groups: those guilty of involvement in the rebellion, and those who had no involvement...

Indonesia is currently desperately trying to manipulate the events of 1959, coercing people to affirm that they already in 1959 wanted integration with Indonesia.

Where were the Indonesians in 1959? Why did they not come immediately to help us then?

It was only in 1975, after the Portuguese allowed East Timor to be free, that the Indonesians dared to invade this territory. What shame on them!

Dili 15 June 1995

For further comment.: Jose Gusmao tel +6189 275478